



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

CALIFORNIA DIVISION

650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100

Sacramento, CA. 95814

October 4, 2006

IN REPLY REFER TO

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Mr. Will Kempton, Director
California Department of Transportation
1120 N Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Attention: Division of Traffic Operations, Room 4201
For Mr. Jesse Bhullar

Dear Mr. Kempton:

SUBJECT: Approval of California's Strategic Highway Safety Plan Process

This letter serves as the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) determination that the process California followed to develop California's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) is in compliance with the requirements set forth in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (Title 23 U.S.C. §148). We would like to extend our appreciation for your leadership and commitment to the safety program that has aided in this endeavor. The California Department of Transportation (Department) is now eligible to obligate the federal-aid safety apportionment under the terms of 23 U.S.C. §148 and receive an annual increase in California's Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) apportionment as granted by Congress starting in FY 2008. Acceptance of California's SHSP also positions the Department to potentially exercise the flexibility allowed by SAFETEA-LU.

It has been a pleasure to work with the Department as well as the entire group of safety stakeholders on this endeavor. FHWA believes the development and, more importantly, implementation of the SHSP is the beginning of a process that will reverse the rising fatality trend in California. We would particularly like to highlight a consultation process that was inclusive of many different safety stakeholders, a data driven process and inclusion of components from other State plans into the California SHSP, all of which was accomplished in a compacted time line. In the end, the safety stakeholders agreed on one common goal of reducing fatalities and serious injuries relating to both behavioral and infrastructure problems. From this overarching goal, 16 specific Challenge Areas were targeted where the biggest impact in reducing fatalities and serious injuries could be made.

As you know, the California SHSP was approved by the Secretary of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency on September 26, 2006. FHWA's involvement and review of the process indicates all requirements of the SHSP process were met; however, we would like to stress the importance of two items that need continued attention. Linking the SHSP with the Transportation Planning Process is critical in ensuring projects and appropriate funding become a reality. In addition, implementing strategies and then evaluating results are essential for success

of this process. The Strategic Highway Safety Implementation Plan kick-off meeting will commence October 5, 2006. During this phase, California should include discussions on linkage to the Transportation Planning Process in addition to implementing/evaluating strategies in the SHSP.

The SHSP is intended to provide guiding direction for all of California's transportation safety stakeholders and to better align their safety efforts. The real work and payoff begins with implementation. As essential as the collaborative process is in the development of the SHSP, it is critical for that collaborative process to be sustained and expanded. Strong emphasis should continue to be placed on the cohesiveness and contributions of all safety stakeholders.

Again, we would like to commend you, your staff and all safety stakeholders for the broad-based participation and thoroughness of California's SHSP. We at FHWA are fully committed to safety and the SHSP process. We stand ready to assist and look forward to working with you and the other stakeholders to ensure more lives are saved in California. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or our FHWA Division Safety Engineers, Mr. Ken Kochevar at 916-498-5853 or Mr. Matthew Schmitz at 916-498-5850.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Gene K. Fong

Gene K. Fong
Division Administrator

cc:

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Kkochevar:lmg